



THE

KNIGHT



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NEW DETAILS ABOUT JUOZAS ZIKARAS'S LIFE

A recent exhibition of works by sculptor Juozas Zikaras was held at the Art Museum of the Lithuanian Cultural Center in Lemont, Illinois. As we all know, Juozas Zikaras designed Lithuanian coins between the two World Wars.

As reported by Dalia Kavaliauskienė in the December 29, 2007 issue of 'Amerikos Lietuvis', the works of Zikaras displayed had belonged to the late daughter-in-law of Juozas Zikaras, Aldona Zikarienė. In her report, Mrs. Kavaliauskienė presents details not previously known about Juozas Zikaras's life and enlightens us about Juozas Zikaras's three sons and daughter. Below is the information reported.

Juozas Zikaras was born on November 18, 1881 in the Paliukai village, Panevėžys District. 1904-1906 he was enrolled at the Vilnius School for the Arts. In 1910 he was admitted to the St. Petersburg Fine Arts Academy, College of Sculpture. In 1914 Juozas married Anele Tubelyte. He graduated from the St. Petersburg Academy in 1916. He went on to teach drawing and drafting at the Schtamberg Applied High School. In 1918 Juozas and his wife returned to Lithuania where he taught at the Panevėžys State High School. In



Juozas Zikaras plaster coin models displayed at the Lithuanian Cultural Center in Lemont, Il.

Continued next page...

1928 he began teaching at the Kaunas School for the Arts, and from 1940, at the Kaunas Applied and Decorative Arts Institute.

Besides designing coins for the Republic of Lithuania, Juozas Zikaras created many sculptures, reliefs and busts. Zikaras also created the Lithuanian Statue of Liberty which was unveiled in Kaunas in 1928. For this creation, the President of the Republic, Antanas Smetona awarded Zikaras the Order of Gediminas. The model for the Lithuanian Statue of Liberty was Emilija Masiliūnaitė.

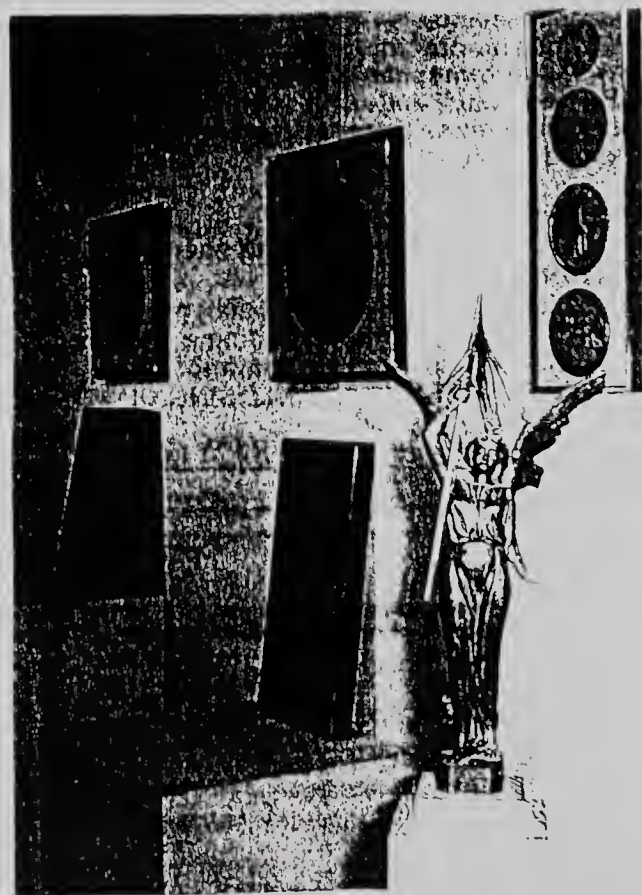
In 1920, Juozas Zikaras and his wife Anele were blessed with the birth of a son, Vaidutis, then in 1922, a second son, Teisutis, and in 1925 twins, a daughter, Anele, and another son, Vainutis.

When the Russians again reoccupied Lithuania in 1944, they began rounding up all the intellectuals for deportation to Siberia and all the young men for their army. The Zikaras family decided that the three sons should flee temporarily to the west. When the Russian security forces could not find Juozas Zikaras's three sons, they arrested Juozas Zikaras and tortured him to find out where Vaidutis, Vainutis and Teisutis were. Juozas Zikaras would not tell them and they tortured him to death.

Juozas Zikaras died at the hands of the Russian secret police on November 10, 1944 and was buried in Kaunas. Juozas Zikaras



Juozas Zikaras in 1924 next to his bust of V. Kudirka, author of the Lithuanian National Anthem



Overview of the Zikaras display at the Art Museum of the Lithuanian Cultural Center in Lemont, IL.



Vainutis, the youngest son of Juozas Zikaras, with his wife Aldona.

never knew if his sons had successfully escaped to the west. It was only in 1963 that his wife Anele Zikarienė and their daughter Alytė learned that all three sons had made it to Germany and then to the United States. Like many DP's at the time, they were afraid to write to their relatives in Lithuania for fear of causing them harm at the hands of the Russian security forces.

Alytė finally was able to come to America and visited with her twin brother Vainutis in 1968. Vainutis Zikaras died in 1993, his wife Aldona followed him in 2003. It was from the estate of Aldona Zikarienė that the Juozas Zikaras items were donated to and displayed at the Lithuanian Cultural Center in Lemont.



Far right: Maria Eglė, daughter of Vainutis and Aldona Zikarai and granddaughter of Juozas Zikaras, with her family.

NEW 10 and 100 LITŲ BANKNOTES ISSUED!

The Bank of Lithuania has issued new 10 and 100 litų banknotes bearing a date of 2007 to replace those dated 1997 & 2001 (10 lt); and 2000 (100 lt) which have become worn in circulation. The notes were issued on March 5, 2008. The news release issued by the Bank states: "Today, the Bank of Lithuania has issued new 10 litas and 100 litas banknotes of 2007 issue, which contain an additional security feature.

The new 10 litas banknotes were printed in Germany, while the 100 litas notes were printed in France. These banknotes contain additional anti-color-copiers security features. Banknote restocking is done every few years as litas banknotes wear out over time. "Sometimes they are even torn or otherwise damaged. So we keep replacing such banknotes with new ones," Reinoldijus Sarkinas, the governor of the Bank of Lithuania said. He underlined that 10 litas banknotes of 1997 and 2001 and 100 litas banknotes of 2000 issue which are in circulation yet shall continue to be accepted as legal tender."

As of press time photographs of these new notes are unavailable to us; hopefully, we will produce them in the next issue of The Knight.

VYTAUTAS THE GREAT MEDALS AND THE AWAKENING OF LITHUANIAN NATIONALISM



By

Henry L. Gaidis



Modern Lithuanian nationalism had its birth in the death throw of the Polish Lithuanian Insurrection of 1863-1864. During those years, the educated youth of the Lithuanian nobility and freedom hungry young peasants rose up with those in Poland in vain attempt at free the country of Czarist Russian occupation and to re-establish the ancient Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. The modern concept of nationality based largely upon ethnic origin or a common language did not then exist in the minds of the average inhabitant living in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. Though all were aware that they came from a separate ethnic group all considered themselves to be Poles since they were citizens of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. In Lithuania the identification of being a Pole even went further in the thinking of its nobility. Since the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had merged with the Kingdom of Poland to form the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Lithuanian nobleman (Bajorai) had become strongly attached to Polish culture. With the great wealth, privileges, and power that came with a Polish class society it is not hard to understand why the Lithuanian nobility turned against their people. They without question embraced the proposition 'gente Lituania, natione Poloni' or Lithuanians by origin Poles by nationality. Though nobleman continued to take pride in their Lithuanian ancestry for political reasons, they soon became more Polish than the Poles. Not only were the name of Lithuanian nobleman Polonized, but even the speaking of Lithuanian abandoned as a way the nobility to set them apart from the peasantry. Polish became the official language of the nation and Lithuanian was looked upon as being inferior and archaic. Though the rights of Lithuania's freeman classes largely ceased to exist during the days of the commonwealth, the peasants staunchly maintained their native language and local customs. The peasants continued to take pride in his ethnic heritage and embraced the Catholic religion that came with the union. For such reasons, the peasants remained loyal to their Polonized nobleman and fought along side them in their vain attempts to liberate the nation from foreign occupation.

The first resistance to the Russification program came from Bishop Motiejus Valancius in Samogitia. A well known Lithuanian preacher and author, Bishop Valancius was an ardent advocate for education. He encouraged the population to boycott Russian language books and took an active part in the establishment of small secret schools where the peasant children were taught to read and write in Lithuanian. Though his efforts, Lithuanian language books were published in nearby East Prussia and organizations formed to smuggle such books into Lithuania. At first the smuggled books were largely religious in nature, but soon covered every topic imaginable. In its effort to spread the Russification among the nation's youth, the Czar selected Lithuanian students were sent to study at the Moscow University. Though such programs were successful in curtailing their interest Polish culture, they ignited among these students for all things Lithuanian. Putting the nation's brightest students in one place actually increased their collective interest and fostered a rebirth in glories of ancient Lithuania. Although Russification was designed to curtail Lithuanian fixation with all things Polish it became a catalyst for Lithuanian nationalism.

Soon the nation's intellectuals embraced all things Lithuanian with even a stronger passion that they had for Polonia that eventually spearheaded the independence movement. Russification which included the prohibition of printing in the Lithuanian language lasted for 40 years (1864-1904) and had been designed to end the nation's fixation with Poland. It was very successful to that extent as only Lithuanian nobles clinging to the hope of preserving their privileged status continued the dream of re-establishing a Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Czesław Miłosz, the Nobel Prize winning literary poet described the Lithuanians as "a people born from philology." The resistance to the policies against the Catholic faith, and the Lithuanian people contributed to the formation of national aspirations and helped to create a sense of national identity among the peasantry which differed from the Polish identity. Polish had been stronger as a cultural medium in Lithuania than in Poland since the 18th century. Unlike the Latinized Polish nobility, the Lithuanian nobility had used Polish to set themselves apart from the peasantry. During Russian imperial times Polish became a general force for unity, it united the nobility with the peasantry, pushing them together towards a common cultural heritage. The Polish language became the essential touchstone of Polish nationality. The Lithuanian peasantry associated Lithuanian not only with the homeland. For them, it was the essential touchstone of the newly formed national identity. In the second half of the 19th century, speaking the language meant identifying oneself as a Lithuanian, as opposed to a Pole. At the end of the 19th century, definition as either a Pole or a Lithuanian became an essential choice in life."

It was not long before the struggle for Lithuanian identity spread to American. Where as the early Polish and Lithuanian immigrants to America looked upon themselves as kindred spirits. They had formed joint Polish and Lithuanian parishes and societies during the 1870-1890 period with little or no major problems. Early Polish, Lithuanians, and Ukrainian immigrants formed the Polish National Alliance a national organization that provided social and beneficent benefits to workers before the establishment of the Social Security System. Still the struggle for national identify would emerge during the first quarter of the 20th century as each of these nationalities chose to go their own ways.



Vytautas

Grunwald Commemorative medal

The historical struggle for Lithuanian national identity in American can also be documented through numismatic items issued during the period. During 1910 the Polish and Lithuanian communities banded together to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald (Zalgardis in Lithuanian and Tannenberg in German). In this epic battle the combined forces of Lithuania and Poland joined together to defeat the Teutonic Knights which has dominated the Baltic for over a century. As typical of that time as now, a number of commemorative medals were issued. The author's has provided a photograph of several such medals in his collection. The obverse of these Grunwald Commemorative feature such designs as the combined Polish, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian Coat of Arms used during the 1862 Insurrection and the busts or figures of Polish King Jogiello and Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas the Great together signifying the unity of these leaders and their countries. The reverse of these medals traditionally bear Polish inscriptions and illustrations of the ancient battle fields.

Continued next page....

VYTAUTAS MEDALS (Continued from page 5....)



Jagiello on left, Vytautas on right. Grunwald Commemorative medals. Vytautas (Witold) on right.

The political unity between Poland and Lithuania had ceased to exist by 1918 with the Lithuanians establishing their own independent republic. Although the Poles sought to hold on to the dream of a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth through the invasion and occupation of the Vilnius regions this was not to be the case. By 1930 there was no question what so ever that the Lithuanians were no a free and independent people. Their independence was even show in their numismatics. Most collectors are familiar with the coins issued during the 1925-1939 period bearing traditional national Vytis or charging knight. This pride in Lithuanian independence was so displayed in various commemorative medals issued in 1930 to commemorate Vytautas the Great.



PHILADELPHIA MEDAL

CHICAGO MEDAL, 1930

Most modern day Lithuanian numismatist our familiar with the outstanding table medals created by Petras Rimša. Surely his most famous table medal commemorated the 500th Anniversary of the death of Grand Duke Vytautas the Great. This medal features the crown bust of Vytautas the Great and legend "Vytautas Didysis" and commemorative dates 1430-1930. The reverse of the medal features a map of ancient Lithuania reaching from the shores of the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Where as the earlier 1910 commemorative medals had gloried the joint leadership of the Polish King Jagiello and Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas the Great, those issued during 1930 make no reference to a Polish collaboration.

Another well known medal was issued by the Chicago Lithuanian American Community for the 1930 Vytautas Commemoration. This medal made from aluminum was issued hanging from a tri-color red, green, and yellow ribbon. The obverse features a crowned bust of Vytautas surrounded by the legend "Vytautas Didysis Lietuvos Kunigaikstis". The reverse features a traditional national Vytis design surrounded by the legend "Vytauto 500M. Mirties Sukaktuves Chicago Ill 1430-1930".

Both of these later issued medals clearly illustrate the separation of the Lithuanian and Polish states. Still today both countries have resumed their traditional friendship cooperating politically in NATO and the European Union as well as having joint military forces serving together in Afghanistan and Iraq. These presented medals show but another example of the history of Lithuania as told through numismatics.

DOUBLED-DIE 1936 2 CENTAI OFFERED ON E-BAY.

A 1936 2 Centai coin featured a doubled die reverse was offered on the E-Bay internet site in late February for a "Buy it now" price of \$799.00. Graded EF-45 by the grading firm ANACS #4076049, no one purchased the coin. It was also marked "make best offer," which was \$68 and was declined. The coin location was at Toms River in New Jersey.

This is the first time we have heard of this error. We suggest our members look at their coins to see if they have one, too. The 2 centai is the scarcest of the 3 1936 minors. It was a new denomination and did not circulate long.

The doubling is especially evident on the left side of the letters on the word CENTAI, and also on the numerals "19" on the date.



10 LITU PATTERN UPDATE

We received a letter from Tony Tumonis about the 1936 10 Litu Vytautas pattern with plain edge (PN6) we mentioned in the last issue. The Heritage Auction claimed that this was the first time that it had been reported. However, Tony has had one of these in his own collection (it is coin struck) already. He states, "mine is much better, as it is Proof-like with full wire rims and square edges." Tony's Lithuanian specimens were exhibited at the American Numismatic Association Convention in 1993 at the Baltimore show, where the display won first place.



**LIETUVOS BANKAS
BANK OF LITHUANIA
CASH DEPARTMENT**

To whom it may concern

**ON DECLARING LEGAL TENDER AND THE ISSUE OF THE 50 LITAS
COMMEMORATIVE COIN DEDICATED TO THE 550TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
OF ST CASIMIR**

**26 February 2008 No. 10.48.-1002-722
Vilnius**

We hereby inform you that on the basis of the decision of the Board of the Bank of Lithuania a new 50 litas commemorative coin of the Republic of Lithuania dedicated to the 550th Birth Anniversary of St Casimir will be launched on 27 February 2008.

The 50 litas coin is made of silver (Ag 925), quality proof, diameter - 38.61 mm, weight 28.28 g. The coin has a mirror surface with a mat relief. The mintage of the coin is 5,000 pieces.

St Casimir on the reverse of the coin is semi-circled by the inscriptions *1458-1484* and *ŠV. KAZIMIERAS* (St Casimir).

The stylized national emblem of the beginning of the XVI century inside a shield is depicted on the obverse of the coin. The inscriptions *LIETUVA*, *2008 metai*, *50 LITŲ* and the sign of the Lithuanian Mint are depicted around.

The edge of the coin is smooth.

The coin was designed by Giedrius Paulauskis.

The coins were minted at the Lithuanian Mint.

The price of the 50 litas coin is LTL 150 (EUR 43.45) (in a display box) and LTL 130 (EUR 37.66) (without a box), including VAT.

Illustrations are attached. Leaflets with the descriptions of the coin are given in a separate envelope.

For further information please refer to the website of the Bank of Lithuania at www.lb.lt.

Yours faithfully,

/signed/

Bronislovas Degutis

Deputy Director

Head of the Banknotes and Coins Division

Contact person: Audronė Gruodytė, tel.: +370 5 2680 316, fax: +370 5 2680 314

SILVER 1938 2 LITAI PATTERN SELLS FOR \$3,360



A silver 1938 2 litai pattern featuring Antanas Smetona on one side, and the 20th anniversary Columns of Gediminas on the other was sold at auction on Saturday March 1, 2008 by Bowers & Merena auctions. The coin, located in Baltimore, MD, was sold to an E-Bay bidder. There were 10 bids; 1 was a live auction bidder on-site. The pattern sold for \$2,800 plus the 20% "buyers fee" bringing it up to \$3,360. There were 8 different bidders, with 10 bids total. Lot 5819.

This auction confirms a trend in recent years for the increase in price in Lithuanian patterns. The coin was designed by sculptor Juozas Zikaras, and was struck at the Belgian Mint in Brussels, Belgium. None were struck in Lithuania. Somehow these patterns were removed from the Mint during the War and made their way to the West. One of these silver 2 litai patterns is illustrated on page 209 of Lithuanian Mint director Jonas Kareckas-Karys' 1953 book, "Nepriklausomos Lietuvos Pinigai" [Independent Lithuanian Money].

Karys writes: (pg. 205) "The 2 litas pieces were not struck in Kaunas. In 1938, the dies were prepared in Brussels. The reverse of the 2 litas piece had not been approved. The Finance Minister could have selected the "Columns of Gediminas" or the Vytis. The author knows two persons having one or two specimens of the new Lithuanian 2 litas "coins." But they are not in truth coins! The Belgian Coin Mint, obviously, made tests, to see how the dies succeeded, and struck a certain number. The metal, whatever was around. It is difficult to imagine how these trial strikes could have gotten out of the walls of the Belgian Coin Mint!"

The master dies for this coin were shipped to Kaunas for production which never came (due to the War), and are illustrated on pp. 139 and 140 of Rūta Kuncienė's 1995 book "Lietuvos Pinigai 1915-1941," illustrations 12-16.

NEW 2008 DATED CIRCULATION COINS ISSUED

The Bank of Lithuania has issued into circulation 2008-dated coins in the following denominations: 2 litai, 20 centų, and 10 centų. Also to be issued later this year will be another collector set dated featuring all of the circulation coins.

2008 COMMEMORATIVE COINS ANNOUNCED

Below is a listing from the www.lbank.lt website of the Bank of Lithuania showing the commemorative coins which will be issued in 2008.

Coin dedicated to the Kaunas Castle (from the series "Historical and Architectural Monuments of Lithuania")

Denomination 50 litas
Silver Ag 925
Diameter 38.61 mm
Weight 28.28 g
Quality proof
Mintage 5,000 pieces
To be issued in the second quarter of 2008



Coin issued for participation in the silver coin programme "Europe. European Cultural Heritage"

Denomination 50 litas
Silver Ag 925
Diameter 38.61 mm
Weight 28.28 g
Quality proof
Mintage 5,000 pieces
To be issued in the second quarter of 2008

Coin from series dedicated to mark the millennium anniversary of the mention of the name of Lithuania

Denomination 100 litas
Gold Au 999.9
Diameter 22.30 mm
Weight 7.78 g
Quality proof
Mintage 5,000 pieces
To be issued in the third quarter of 2008

Coin featuring Lithuanian nature

Denomination 50 litas
Silver Ag 925
Diameter 38.61 mm
Weight 28.28 g
Quality proof
Mintage 5,000 pieces
To be issued in the fourth quarter of 2008

WANT/FOR SALE ADS

WANTED: High grade earlier Lithuania (pre-WWII) banknotes for personal collection. Robert Pletta, P.O. Box 480, Friendsville, MD 21531-0480. E-mail: rpletta@gcnetmail.net.

WANTED: Pre-1708 Lithuanian coins. Please send me a list of what you have for my generous offer. Tony Tumonis. P.O. Box 89792. Tucson, Arizona 89792. E-mail: LITH57@aol.com.

FOR SALE: DOUBLED DIE 1936 silver Vytautas the Great 10 litų: #2 obverse; and #4 reverse. Both \$55 each, XF condition. Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St., Albion, MI 49224. E-mail: Albionfp@hotmail.com.

IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened to announce the death of Carl F. Kazlauskas of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Carl died on Thursday, December 13, 2007. Carl was a charter member of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. He stepped forward when the LNA was being formed and he proved himself a loyal member of the LNA for these past 30 years. May he rest in peace.

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